



American Cancer Society
Cancer Action Network
825 Brook Street
I-91 Tech Center
Rocky Hill, CT. 06067
(203)-379-4850
www.acscan.org

**Public Health Committee
March 15, 2013
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network Testimony**

S.B. No. 990 (Raised) AN ACT CONCERNING SMOKING POLICIES AND PROHIBITING SMOKING IN CERTAIN AREAS.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society, supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem.

While extremely well intentioned, **we must respectfully OPPOSE SB 990 – AN ACT CONCERNING SMOKING POLICIES AND PROHIBITING SMOKING IN CERTAIN AREAS.** The bill would include e-cigarettes in the definition of smoking, create an outdoors smoke free buffer zone around doorways and windows in public buildings and include most businesses of more than one employee in the smoking prohibition.

When the Clean Indoor Air Act was passed by the legislature in 2003, certain concessions had to be made which led to a number of exemptions to the smoking ban created by the Act, including small businesses defined as fewer than 5 employees. Additionally, larger businesses could create smoking rooms for their employees as long as the rooms met certain requirements, including being well ventilated.

SB 990 exchanges one exemption for another by including businesses of more than one employee yet exempting sole employee home based or owner-operated businesses. Additionally, the bill *expands* the smoking room loophole to include the small businesses previously exempt from the requirement. We do not support smoke rooms or ventilation standards.

Separating smokers from non-smokers, cleaning the air, and ventilating the building cannot prevent exposure if people still smoke inside the building. No ventilation system can completely remove the cancer-causing and toxic chemicals in secondhand smoke.

The 2006 U.S. Surgeon General's Report, *"The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Secondhand Smoke,"* concluded that ventilation and smoking rooms cannot control exposure to secondhand smoke. Since the landmark report's release, the Institute of Medicine and the U.S. President's Cancer Panel have both endorsed 100% smoke free indoor policies, free of loopholes, to protect workers and patrons from developing adverse health effects due to exposure.

While much more research must be done regarding the potential health consequences caused by the vapor of e- cigarettes to non-users, we recognize that the usage of e-cigarettes further complicates efforts by business owners and officials to enforce smoke free laws. ACS CAN supports including e-cigarettes in new smoke-free laws or amendments to existing laws but there needs to be a clear and separate definition of these products.

Tobacco related diseases are the single most preventable cause of death in our society and it is estimated that 4,700 Connecticut residents will die from tobacco related illnesses in 2013 alone. Smoking costs the state of Connecticut \$1.63 billion dollars a year in health care costs and an additional \$1.03 billion in lost productivity as a result of tobacco use—*each year*. Smoking kills more people in Connecticut than alcohol, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined. We can and we must do more.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network strongly believes that a 100% smoke free environment will provide for better working conditions; help ease the health care crisis burden on all of Connecticut's citizens and most importantly save lives. We look forward to the opportunity of working with this committee, the Department of Health and other stakeholders to develop legislation that would accomplish that basic health care goal.

Thank you.